

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for compressing packets, comprising:
receiving, at a first network device, a plurality of
packets, each packet from a separate one of a group of
5 media streams, each packet comprising a payload and a
header;

generating a group packet, the group packet
comprising:

a group identifier identifying the group of
10 media streams; and

the payload of each of the packets; and

communicating the group packet to a second network
device.

15 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein:
each of the media streams is synchronous; and
the method further comprises identifying the group
of media streams by determining that the media streams in
the group have the same periodicity.

20 3. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
generating a group setup message, the group setup
message comprising:

the group identifier; and

25 state information for each media stream in the
group; and

communicating the group setup message to the second
network device.

4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the state information enables the second network device to:

reconstruct the headers corresponding to the payloads in the group packet; and

5 reform the corresponding packets from the reconstructed headers and the corresponding payloads.

5. The method of Claim 4, wherein:

10 the packets are Internet protocol (IP) packets carried over User Datagram Protocol (UDP);

the method further comprises compressing each packet into a compressed UDP (cUDP) packet comprising the payload of each packet and a compressed header; and

15 the state information permits the second network device to reconstruct the compressed headers.

6. The method of Claim 1, further comprising multiplexing the group packet into a multiplexed packet with a plurality of other packets.

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7. A communication device, comprising:

a first interface operable to receive a plurality of packets, each packet from a separate one of a group of media streams, each packet comprising a payload and a header;

a grouping module operable to generate a group packet, the group packet comprising:

a group identifier identifying the group of media stream; and

the payload of each of the packets; and

a second interface operable to communicate the group packet for receipt by a remote device.

8. The communication device of Claim 7, wherein:

each of the media streams is synchronous; and

the grouping module is further operable to identify the group of media stream by determining that the media streams in the group have the same periodicity.

9. The communication device of Claim 7, wherein:

the grouping module is further operable to generate a group setup message, the group setup message comprising:

the group identifier; and

state information for each media stream in the group; and

the second interface is further operable to communicate the group setup message to the second network device.

11. Logic embodied in a computer readable medium operable to perform the steps of:

receiving, at a first network device, a plurality of
5 packets, each packet from a separate one of a group of media streams, each packet comprising a payload and a header;

generating a group packet, the group packet comprising:

10 a group identifier identifying the group of media streams; and

the payload of each of the packets; and

communicating the group packet to a second network device.

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12. The logic of Claim 11, wherein:

each of the media streams is synchronous; and

the logic is further operable to perform the step of identifying the group of media stream by determining that
20 the media streams in the group have the same periodicity.

13. The logic of Claim 11, wherein the logic is further operable to perform the steps of:

25 generating a group setup message, the group setup message comprising:

the group identifier; and

state information for each media stream in the group; and

30 communicating the group setup message to the second network device.

16. A system for compressing packets, comprising:
means for receiving, at a first network device, a
plurality of packets, each packet from a separate one of
a group of media streams, each packet comprising a
5 payload and a header;
means for generating a group packet, the group
packet comprising:
a group identifier identifying the group of
media streams; and
10 the payload of each of the packets; and
means for communicating the group packet to a second
network device.

062891.0640

17. A method for decompressing packets, comprising:
receiving a group setup message, the group setup
message comprising:

5 a group identifier associated with a group of
media streams, each stream comprising a plurality of
media packets, each media packet comprising a header and
a payload; and

state information for each media stream;

10 receiving a group packet, the group packet
comprising:

the group identifier; and

the payload of one media packet from each media
stream in the group; and

for each payload in the group packet:

15 reconstructing a header for the payload based
on the state information for the corresponding media
stream; and

20 combining the reconstructed header with the
corresponding payload from the group packet to form a
reconstructed media packet.

18. The method of Claim 17, wherein the step of
reconstructing the header comprises:

25 determining a first portion of the header based on
the state information;

determining a second portion of the header by
applying decompression to the first portion of the
header; and

30 reconstructing the header from the first and second
portions of the header.

19. The method of Claim 17, wherein:

the media packets are Internet protocol (IP) packets;

5 the first portion of the header is a compressed User Datagram Protocol (cUDP) header; and

the second portion of the header is determined using cUDP decompression.

10 20. The method of Claim 17, wherein the group packet includes the group setup message.

21. The method of Claim 17, further comprising replying to the group setup message with an
15 acknowledgement, the acknowledgement comprising:

the group identifier; and

an identifier for each media stream in the group

22. The method of Claim 17, further comprising:
20 receiving updated state information for one or more of the media streams; and

updating the corresponding state information.

23. A communication device, comprising:

a memory operable to store a group identifier associated with a group of media streams and further operable to store state information about each media stream, each media stream comprising a plurality of media packets, each media packet comprising a header and a payload;

an interface operable to receive a group packet, the group packet comprising:

the group identifier; and

a payload from one media packet from each media stream; and

a processor operable to:

reconstruct a header corresponding to each payload in the group packet using the state information; and

reconstruct the media packets from the corresponding headers and payloads.

24. The communication device of Claim 23, wherein reconstructing the header comprises:

determining a first portion of the header based on the state information;

determining a second portion of the header by applying decompression to the first portion of the header; and

reconstructing the header from the first and second portions of the header.

25. The communication device of Claim 24, wherein:
the media packets are Internet protocol (IP)
packets;

the first portion of the header is a compressed User
5 Datagram Protocol (cUDP) header; and

the second portion of the header is determined using
cUDP decompression.

26. The communication device of Claim 23, wherein
10 the group packet further comprises:

the group identifier; and

the state information for the media streams.

27. The communication device of Claim 23, wherein
15 the interface is further operable to receive a group
setup message comprising the group identifier and the
state information for the media streams.

28. The communication device of Claim 27, wherein:
20 the processor is further operable to generate an
acknowledgement, the acknowledgement comprising:

the group identifier; and

an identifier for each media stream in the
group; and

25 the interface is further operable to communicate the
acknowledgement to a network device that sent the group
setup message.

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30. Logic embodied in a computer readable medium operable to perform the steps of:

receiving a group setup message, the group setup message comprising:

5 a group identifier associated with a group of media streams, each media stream comprising a plurality of media packets, each media packet comprising a header and a payload; and

state information for each media stream;

10 receiving a group packet comprising:

the group identifier; and

the payload of one media packet from each media stream in the group; and

for each payload in the group packet:

15 reconstructing a header for the payload based on the state information for the corresponding media stream; and

20 combining the reconstructed header with the corresponding payload from the group packet to form a reconstructed media packet.

31. The logic of Claim 30, wherein the step of reconstructing the header comprises:

25 determining a first portion of the header based on the state information;

determining a second portion of the header by applying decompression to the first portion of the header; and

30 reconstructing the header from the first and second portions of the header.

32. The logic of Claim 31, wherein:
the media packets are Internet protocol (IP)
packets;

5 the first portion of the header is a compressed User
Datagram Protocol (cUDP) header; and

the second portion of the header is determined using
cUDP decompression.

062891.0640

33. A system for decompressing packets, comprising:
means for receiving a group setup message
comprising:

5 a group identifier associated with a group of
media streams, each stream comprising a plurality of
media packets, each media packet comprising a header and
a payload; and

state information for each media stream;

10 means for receiving a group packet, the group packet
comprising:

the group identifier; and

the payload of one media packet from each media
stream in the group; and

15 means for reconstructing a header for the payload
based on the state information for the corresponding
media stream for each payload in the group packet; and

20 means for combining the reconstructed header with
the corresponding payload from the group packet to form a
reconstructed media packet for each payload in the group
packet.